

1. The Highest Attainment of *Bodhisatta* (Buddha-To-Be)

Some people believe, that if somebody is a Buddha-To-Be, they can attain Stream-Entry (*Sotāpatti*) and be born for next millions of lives until they become Buddhas. This however is not supported in Theravāda Buddhism. Indeed, if somebody attains Stream-Entry, they have maximum seven lives to be born (and less, of course, if they progress on their path earlier) and thereafter they become Arahants, liberating themselves entirely from the Cycle of Rebirth, *Samsāra*.

The Buddha Himself is reported to have said: "With the utter destruction of three fetters, he is a seven-times-at-most attainer who, after roaming and wandering on among devas and humans seven times at most, makes an end of suffering."¹ Indeed, a Stream-Enterer, free from (1) doubt about the Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha, (2) self-view, and (3) clinging for rites and rituals incompatible with Buddha's Dhamma, will attain the final attainment of Arahanthood within seven lives at most. It is therefore clear, that a Buddha-to-be, who is going to roam in the Cycle of Rebirth for millions of lives (or more), therefore cannot be a Stream-Enterer. The Buddha-to-be becomes Stream-Enterer, Once-Returner, Non-Returner, and Arahant during His final, last life, when He becomes the Buddha.

Before becoming a Buddha, it is *Sankhārupekkhā Nāṇa* that the Buddha-to-be can attain at best:

<i>Patisambhidāmagga-Atthakathā</i> ²	Tr. by monk Sarañā
<i>Tiṇṇam saññojanānam pahānāyāti sakkāyadiṭṭhivicikicchāsīlabbataparāmāsānam pahānattham.</i>	"Having removed the three fetters" means (the yogi) has removed self-view, doubt (about the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha), (and) clinging for rites and rituals (contradicting Buddha's Dhamma).
<i>PacchimabHAVikāpi bodhisattā ettheva saṅgahā gacchanti.</i>	Even the Buddhas-to-be (Bodhisattas) in their last life are just ("going to (be)") included there.
<i>ApacchimabHAVikā pana vipassanām saṅkhārupekkham pāpetvā ṭhapenti.</i>	However, (the Buddhas-to-be) who are not in (their) last life, will attain the Equanimity of Formations (<i>Saṅkhārupekkhā Nāṇa</i>) and establish (themselves in it).

Ledi Sayadaw's "Anudipanī Pāṭha" (MM p.304)	Tr. by monk Sarañā
<i>Sabbaññu bodhisattā pana pubbabuddhānam sāsane pabbajitvā</i>	However, it is said in Commentaries, that the omniscient Buddhas-to-be, having ordained ("gone forth") in the religion of previous Buddhas,

¹ *Ārguttara Nikāya* 3 – 4(9). *Samaṇavaggo* – 7. *Dutiyasikkhā Sutta*, tr. by Bhikkhu Bodhi, "The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha", Wisdom Publications, Boston, 2012; p.318.

² *Patisambhidāmagga-Atthakathā* - 9. *Saṅkhārupekkhāñānaniddesavaṇṇanā* - par. 56 (MM vol.1 p.250)

<i>vipassanā kammam ārabhantā anulomaññāṇam āhacca t̄hapentīti at̄thaka thāsu vuttam̄.</i>	Making effort in <i>Vipassanā</i> (meditation) practice, having reached the Conformity Knowledge (<i>Anuloma Nāṇa</i>), establish (themselves).
<i>Tattha "āhaccā"ti idam sarikhārupekkhāññānassa matthakapattidassanattham vuttanti dat̄habbam̄.</i>	It should be known that there "having reached" – this is said in order to show the highest attainment of Equanimity of Formations (<i>Sarikhārupekkhā Nāṇa</i>).

Bhikkhu Isidatta has mentioned this information in his "*Theravadin Essays*".³ "You might at least reach "Sankharupekkha" in this life, the insight knowledge of the equanimity with regard to all phenomena. If you happen to be a Bodhisatta with a real (and I don't mean i-liik-to-help-others or compassion-as-mainstream) determination formed over numerous lives you would not be able to push your insight meditation beyond this barrier (i.e. Sankharupekkha)."

Well then, so what is this *Sarikhārupekkhā Nāṇa*? It is the eleventh Insight Knowledge out of the complete seventeen. Note that *Anuloma Nāṇa* is thirteenth. The attainment of Enlightenment (in this case Stream-Entry, *Sotāpatti*), is sixteenth of the seventeen (the seventeenth is then just reviewing the attainment itself).

Sarikhārupekkhā Nāṇa is explained by Mahāsi Sayadaw in his "*Progress of Insight*" –

"Now, in the act of noticing, effort is no longer required to keep formations before the mind or to understand them. After the completion of each single act of noticing, the object to be noticed will then appear of itself, and insight knowledge, too, will of itself notice and understand it. It is as if no further effort need be made by the meditator. Formerly, owing to seeing the dissolution of formations, there arose, in successive order, the aspect of fearfulness, the perception of misery, the aspect of disgust, the desire for deliverance, and dissatisfaction with the knowledge so far acquired. But now these mental states no longer arise even though, in the present state too, the breaking up of formations which are dissolving more rapidly is closely perceived. Even if a painful feeling arises in the body, no mental disturbance (grief) arises, and there is no lack of fortitude in bearing it. Generally, however, at this stage, pains will be entirely absent, that is, they do not arise at all. Even if the meditator thinks about something fearful or sad, no mental disturbance will arise, be it in the form of fear or of sorrow. This, firstly, is "the abandoning of fear" at the stage of "equanimity about formations."

On the other hand, because Buddhas-to-be have attained this level for many lives, they are very skillful in leading others toward this (or perhaps even higher) attainment.

³ "*Buddhist Essays*", Bhikkhu Isidatta, Lennart Lopin, 2009; p.24.

2. Did the Buddha-To-Be Eat Cannabis?

See this documentary about Cannabis – "The Truth About Smoking Cannabis | BBC Documentary" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SASVxLmCjx8>. Move to 28:15 and you will hear: "... But the plant cannabis has been used medicinally for over 4000 years. The Chinese use it from blocking bowels, Buddha ate it for enjoyment, a queen Victoria used it for PMT."

According to Chris Bennett, a noted cannabis-historian,⁴ "the 3rd century AD Indian text, the Lalita Vistara has been cited as a likely source: "The prince coming to the Ka-ye (Gaya) mountain, to the Ni-h'n (Nairanjana) river, reflected, considering that, as he intended to penetrate to the secret influences which actuate the conduct of men, he might, after six years, be in a position to save them. Thus he addressed himself to the practice of austerities (Dushkaracharya), each day eating one grain of hemp, one grain of rice; by this means reducing himself to a condition of overcoming all pleasure. Afterwards, perceiving that this was not the true way, he pursued the contrary method, using indulgencies, bathing, perfuming himself, and so on; by these means he subdued sorrow (as the text says)." Also, Christian Raetsch's says that same stuff, in "Marijuana Medicine" - that according to Tibetan/'Lamaistic' Buddhism, Buddha ate hemp seeds during those first 6 years."

Elsewhere⁵ I find this info - "The Buddha is said to have eaten a grain of rice every day, not hemp, before his enlightenment. The Buddha and Buddhism in general strongly advice against (prohibits, in the case of monks and nuns) the use of any mind-altering substances whatsoever, be it alcohol, drugs or whatever. Buddhist don't strive for "mystical experiences", on the contrary all is about seeing the world clearly and unobstructedly as it is. Any kind of mind-altering substance would be a serious obstacle to this."

So, did the Buddha eat a grain of rice every day? According to the Commentary for *Samyutta Nikāya*,⁶ the Buddha-to-be consumed "*pasatamuggāyūsādīni*", i.e. "the liquid of a boiled handful of mung beans, etc." - something certainly not reminiscent of eating cannabis.

May all beings be happy and healthy ☺

monk Saranā

⁴ <http://newbuddhist.com/discussion/6820/did-buddha-really-eat-nothing-but-hemp-seeds>

⁵ <https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20080502193914AAVBcI0>

⁶ *Samyutta Nikāya Atṭhakathā – 1. Sagāthāvagga – 7. Brāhmaṇasamyutta – 3. Devahitasuttavannanā*